

Online Resources

www.thepeopleindairy.org.au is the core resource for *The People in Dairy* program. It forms the basis of the program updates and training - including the *PeopleGPS*, Diploma of Human Resource Management (Dairy) as well as all National Centre of Dairy Education Australia courses with a people component.

The website contains the conceptual framework, technical information, templates and tools for farmers, service providers and industry stakeholders with an interest in this domain.

Context

Having clear, consistent information is fundamental to supporting any change management program on farm.

The reasons for choosing to have the resources web-based were:

- It is accessible by dairy farmers and service providers across Australia
- It allows up-to-date, regionally-specific information to be provided; this is especially important for changes in legislated areas such as Industrial Relations laws and Work Health & Safety
- The tools and templates provided enable users to customise outputs to their own circumstances

Designed and populated by an expert panel with input from five focus groups of farmers, the online resources were launched in May 2008.

About the online resource

Information on the website is organised around seven key theme areas:

- A people approach
- Farm policies and systems
- Recruitment
- Engagement and reward
- Individual performance
- Working together
- Planning for the future

Users can (and do) access the information and download the templates and tools such as the Generator to construct position descriptions, standard operating procedures and safety protocols.

The website also has:

- A comprehensive search facility.
- A subscription service where visitors can elect to subscribe to a regular email bulletin (*People Matters*) about new content on the site.
- The facility for online enquiry or comment about content.
- A secure forum that is hosted by the program – where Diploma graduates and candidates can raise issues for discussion or pose questions to *The People in Dairy* expert panel.

Outcomes

The site won an international design award (WebAward: Non-profit category) for 'innovation, content, copywriting and ease-of-use' when it was launched in 2008.

As the program has rolled out, the website content has been expanded and edited, including new modules on planning for the future, leasing and



TPiD area	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Farm
TPiD objective	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Farmers have clear, consistent information and resources about people management
Enabling environment	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Industry has agreed terminology, conceptual frameworks and core resources for best practice
Audience	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Farmers & Advisers

“Wow, what a fabulous informative site. Page after page of information that is positive for all parties involved.”

- Website feedback from a farm assistant

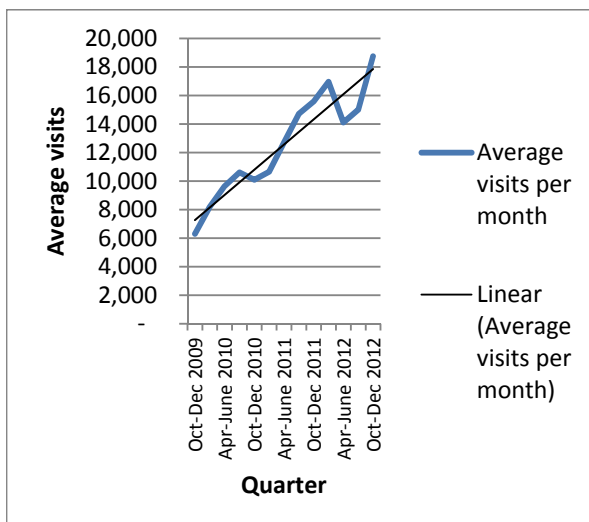
share-farming resources, and some useful web apps to aid searching and navigation.

The currency of the online resources have been maintained through multiple changes in Australia's industrial relations laws.

Website usage is regularly summarised in reports to Dairy Australia. In short:

- The website has grown to 210 web pages and has over 310 downloadable resources and a number of interactive tools.
- Visits to the site have risen steadily since its launch, to a high of an average of 4,500 visits per week by December 2012.
- Downloads of online resources have also grown steadily, with a total of 63,000 recorded in 2012.
- The Engagement and Reward module has been particularly popular.

Several organisations, including the National Centre for Dairy Education Australia, the VFF and various dairy companies, now refer their website *The People in Dairy* for information in the people domain.



'The People in Dairy website is the best I've seen for accessing information to help employers work through all aspects of employing staff. In the past we faced real challenges....but the People in Dairy brings it all together.'

'I've had people ask me how we did things, but now I tell them to go to the website, work through the various topics and download the templates which they can customise to fit their farming operations.'

'If they work through the People in Dairy website, they can be confident they'll have everything covered.'

-Farmer from Western Victoria.

Program learning

The website is continually updated to provide farmers with accurate information and resources. This responsiveness has been critical during periods of significant change such as the overhaul of industrial relations laws including the demise of WorkChoices, advent of the Fair Work Act, referral of powers by states to the Federal government, the Pastoral Award modernisation process and OH&S legislation changes.

The external review of *The People in Dairy* in 2012 found that the website is the resource most used by respondents, with 88% accessing it for information and 77% using it for templates and tools. It was rated as highly valuable for assisting farmers and advisers in staff recruitment, management and retention, and other people issues.

The future

After five years, the site would now benefit from a refresh of its architecture. Maintaining a dedicated online resource is essential for the continuity of on-farm change promoted by this program.